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IN ARIZONA, NEW PARTNERSHIP LEADS NEW ROADMAP

SOURCE: ANTHONY BRINO DATE: FEB 20, 2014

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Continuing a trend of HIE partnerships, two health IT organizations in Arizona are joining forces to expand a statewide HIE network as they prepare for the next decade of work.

The Arizona Health-e Connection (AzHeC) and the HIE organization Health Information Network of Arizona have crafted a formal affiliation, announced in early February.

Under the deal, the Health Information Network of Arizona, which launched its regional HIEs in 2010, will be brought under the umbrella of AzHeC, an HIT nonprofit that was founded in 2007.

AzHeC plans to continue working as a multi-stakeholder organization on policy development, education and engagement and as the Arizona Regional Extension Center, while the Health Information Network of Arizona will serve as the statewide HIE network under the new organizational umbrella.

The new affiliation evolves out of existing partnerships. The two organizations started mulling the affiliation idea last year, leaders say, after a collaboration memorandum of understanding was inked in 2010. Since then, AzHeC has done marketing, recruitment, consumer education and management work for the Health Information Network, while it has focused on building the HIE.

"In discussions with board members of both organizations as well as discussions with other healthcare stakeholders, there is consensus that there should be one organization to come to for all statewide HIT and HIE needs," said David Dexter, chairman of the AzHeC Board and CEO of Sonora Quest Laboratories, a part of Laboratory Sciences of Arizona.

"The formal affiliation will combine the strengths of both organizations and streamline communications, membership and participation to continue the accelerated adoption of HIT and HIE in Arizona," said William Vanaskie, chairman of the Health Information Network of Arizona and the COO of the Maricopa Integrated Health System.

The affiliation precedes a new vision being articulated for health IT in Arizona. AzHeC is getting ready to publish Arizona's Health IT Roadmap 2.0 (eight years after first vision document) with recommendations for advancing stakeholder goals in the coming years.

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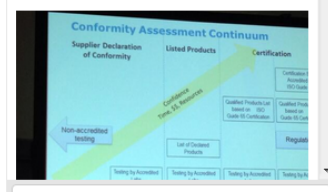
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